1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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624 chiefs, called by the Miskito name *wita* or *wihta* (lit.: "head"), resided in the larger villages.

648 Now the government of the two republics, Honduras and Nicaragua, is represented by *comandantes*, who are invariably Ladinos. Indian *subcomandantes* are occasionally named in the larger areas, but their authority is practically insignificant. Some deference is also paid by the Indians to the elders of the settlements, and especially to the sukya. The officials despatched from Tegucigalpa or Managua are rarely of the better element, and have at times committed great abuses among the timid and peaceful aborigines. They are too frequently men of low morals who try to enrich themselves by imposing fines upon the Indians, which are put into their own pocket, or by compelling the natives to work for their personal benefit.

LAWS: CRIME AND ITS PUNISHMENT

627 ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.—In former days the punishment of criminals was intrusted to the individual wronged rather than to special officers of justice. If the injured person did not take any steps to revenge himself he was considered a coward.

177 692 681 Toward the middle of the eighteenth century, when British influence spread to the "court" of the principal Miskito chief, special officers, known by the name *kwatmas* (from the English "quartermaster") were intrusted with the execution of government orders and the administration of justice. Punishment was inflicted in the shape of fines, flogging, and death by hanging; prisons were unknown. On their periodical visits these officers used to whip all the young people whom they could seize, in order to cure them of their laziness and stinginess, apparently whether they were guilty of the charge or not. This was called "teaching the people" (M.: *upla smalkaya;* S.: *möh sumalnin, möh sumalnaka*) and had the object of inculcating principles of good conduct and morality. An account of such proceedings is given by Bell (b: 278–282).

685 THEFT.—A thief was compelled according to Indian law to restore twice the value of the stolen object.

847 INFANTICIDE.—This was apparently not considered a crime in former days under certain circumstances. (See Children: Their Birth and Education.)

683 BODILY INJURY.—For any bodily injury, whether done intentionally or not, a payment of "blood money" (M.: *tala mana;* T., P.: *a minit;* U.: *awas makalnak*) was collected.

● 682 MURDER.—A murderer had to follow his victim into death. If he should not do so voluntarily, the relations of the murdered man might kill him without risk of punishment; besides, in that case, his memory would be dishonored. The *lex talionis* was applied rigidly.

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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Poisoning is nowadays the usual method of disposing of an enemy. The poison is administered in rum or fermented drinks, with the aid of a third person, when the intended victim is intoxicated. This method of killing has been rather common in recent years. As poison the Indian uses some strong native drugs, alligator gall, or even cyanide stolen from the gold mines. The Miskito from Rio Coco are supposed to make frequent use of poison. If the Indian kills his enemy with the aid of a gun, arrow, or knife, he will have to follow him into death, but such does not appear to be the case when poison has been administered.

ADULTERY.—Morality is at a low ebb, particularly among the Miskito, and most of the disputes and crimes that occasionally take place are the results of quarrels about women. The injured husband inflicts a severe beating on his unfaithful wife or attempts to choke or drown her in order to make her tell the name of the other delinquent, from whom a payment (M.: *mûrin mana;* T., P.: *yal minit;* U.: *yal makalnak*) is exacted. Such a "woman payment" consists generally of a cow or a gun. Otherwise wife beating is not common. Occasionally a woman has committed suicide for having received a sound beating from her husband on account of her unfaithfulness, and the latter was then compelled to pay up to her relatives. Bell (a: 251) states that he had known men keeping wives for the sole purpose of the revenue derived from their misconduct.

DEBT.—If a debtor refuses to pay up or to return or refund the object or money borrowed, the creditor might go to his plantation and pay himself with provisions without risk of punishment. If such a debt can not be collected in an amiable way, the creditor, instead of wrangling with the debtor, might destroy some property belonging to a third person. Pressure is then brought to bear upon the debtor and he has to make good the damage done.

VARIOUS.—Sometimes an Indian who had been grossly insulted and was unable to collect payment would commit suicide, whereupon the offender had to do the same. This system led to complicated cases, and the following has been recorded by the Moravian missionaries. A Miskito woman, being continually mistreated by her husband, ran away from him. The latter then proceeded to the house of his parents-in-law, where he was told that his wife, unable to endure his barbarous treatment any longer, had hung herself. The man understood what that meant and committed suicide without hesitation. Then the woman, whom every one had believed dead, returned to the village. But now the relations of her husband wanted her to commit suicide also for having caused the latter's death by her flight from home. As the unfortunate woman hesitated, not having the courage to do what was asked of her, her husband's relations seized her and hung her to the nearest tree.

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
SA15 Mosquito SA15

of quarrel between two women. The fact remains that very little wrong-doing exists among the Miskito since once a wrongdoer is found out he loses the respect of his community and usually moves to another locality. It a debtor refuses to pay or refund an object or money borrowed, the creditor informes the village of this fact and he can go to the plantation of the debtor and pay himself in provisions without risk. Such pressure usually causes the debtor to make goods his debt.

In rare cases today poisoning is used to exterminate an enemy. This is accomplished by the use of poisonous extracts from plants, alligator gall, or cyanide stolen from the mines. If, however, an Indian shoots his enemy, he must likewise follow him to death. In certain cases, if an Indian has been insulted and cannot collect payment, he commits suicide, wherepon the offender must do the same. In most instances the threat in itself brings apology and payment. In general there is little crime among the Miskito.

The Indians show great reserve, are relatively silent, honest and generally reliable. Stinginess is considered the worst vice and foreigners who bestow gifts are known as good men. They are not quarrelsome. Recent contacts with foreigners has increased their shrewdness and they are less shy than they were years ago.

Members of the family address each other according to sex and relation, such as mother, father, daughter, brother, etc. Each has a name given for some peculiarity. Thus, an infant receives no name until some characteristic is noted.

The mentioning of a deceased person's name is taboo and is a direct insult to refer to the person in the presence of relatives. Husband and wife call each other *mayi*, my consort; before a child is born to them he calls her *kiku*, girl, while she calls him *wahma*, young man. After a child is born they often call each other *luhpi yapti*, my child's mother, and *luhpi aisa*, my child's father. *Mahma* or *masa* are used to address a son or brother, whereas *kika* or *misis* refer to daughter or sister. Old men and women are called *dama*, grandfather, and *kuka*, grandmother. The common form of salutation is *naksa* and occasionally *nakki sma* (how are you?) The other replies *aiñca sna* (I am well). When they take leave the expression is *aisabi* (we will speak again).

DWELLINGS

The villages *(tawan)* are located chiefly on the banks of waterways, rivers and lagoons. The reason for this may be twofold. First the waterways form the chief source of transportation by boat and secondly agriculture and wild fruits can be developed and secured near